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MoTC Union Minister calls for achieving success in works, without interruption of process

“EMPHASIS must be placed on free from danger, safety, working at full capacity, sustainable development and

environmental conservation to improve civil aviation sector which can directly support State economy,” said Union Minister for Transport and

Communications Admiral Tin Aung San at a meeting with staff from the Department of Civil Aviation and Myanmar National Airlines yesterday.

The director-general of the Department of Civil Aviation and the chief executive officer of MNA reported on kinds of aircraft registered in Myan-

mar, issuance of pilot licence, conditions of airports, services of aviation communications,

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Covishield vaccinated to diplomats, embassy staff, families



The MoHS staff provide COVID vaccination to the ambassadors and embassy staff in Yangon on 5 April 2021.

THE Ministry of Health and Sports provided COVID-19 vaccination to the ambassadors of Yangon-based India, Brunei Darussalam, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nepal, the Philippines and

Qatar, embassy staff and families, totalling 73, at Myanmar Convention Centre on Mindama Road in Yangon yesterday.

Covishield vaccination bought through public finance was injected into diplomats

and families free of charge under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Sports.

Arrangements are being made to vaccinate embassy staff from 19 Myanmar-based embassies and staff from UN

agencies.

They will be provided with double vaccination. Records on completion certificate of COVID-19 vaccination will be handed over systematically. —MNA

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**Republic of the Union of Myanmar
State Administration Council
Nine Objectives**

1. Political affairs

- (a) Building of a Union based on democracy and federalism in practising genuine disciplined multiparty democracy in a full fairness manner
- (B) Emphasizing of restoration of eternal peace for the entire nation in line with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)
- (c) Continuous practising of the “principle” of peaceful co-existence among countries by holding up the independent, active and non-aligned foreign policy

2. Economic affairs

- (a) Further development of production based on agriculture and livestock breeding through modern techniques and all-round development of other

sectors of the economy as well

- (b) Stability of market economy and inviting international investments to develop the economy of entire ethnic people
- (c) Encouragement of local businesses to create employment opportunities to be able to produce many products of the State

3. Social affairs

- (a) For ensuring of dynamism of Union spirit which is genuine patriotic spirit
- (b) Following customs and traditions of all ethnic nationalities and preservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage and national characters
- (c) Enhancement of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation

Five future programmes of State Administration Council

1. The Union Election Commission will be reconstituted to carry out tasks that should be done, including inspection of voting lists in accordance with the law.
2. Effective measures will be taken for the prevention of current infectious COVID-19 with added momentum.
3. Efforts will be made to recover businesses that faced loss caused by COVID-19 in various ways as quickly as possible.
4. Emphasis will be placed on restoring eternal peace in the entire nation in line with agreements from the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) as much as possible.
5. When missions will be accomplished in accord with provisions of the state of emergency, a free and fair multiparty democracy election will be held in accordance with the Constitution (2008), and further tasks will be undertaken to hand over State duty to the winning party meeting the standards of democracy.

Military hospitals continue providing healthcare to civilians

MILITARY hospitals in the townships of regions and states keep providing medical treatments to the people to solve their healthcare services difficulties. A total of 118,323 outpatients and 4,482 inpatients reached these hospitals from 5 February to date.

Senior medical experts, medics and nurses have conducted 5,519 major operations and 2,869 minor operations. The senior doctors treat serious cases. These hospitals managed to deliver 7,452 babies while bringing 7,452 pregnant women to the respective mil-

itary hospitals. Of those 2,917 cases are done in caesarean section and 4,535 cases in ordinary delivery.

Officials from the respective commands also provided the patients and companions of patients with foods and cash assistance. — MNA



Local patients are receiving medical treatments at the military hospital in Mawlamyine.

Corrigendum

In the news release of ‘Response to the remarks by Ms Christine Schraner Burgener Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Myanmar made at the UN Security Council session on 31 March 2021’ appeared on page 11 of the 5 April 2021 issue of The Global New Light of Myanmar Daily Newspaper.

PLEASE read, “Ms Burgener condemned the military leadership ignoring the well-functioning of State administrative mechanism which is the result of the systematic implementation on executive duties by the State Administration Council for the State peace and stability.” instead of the sub-paragraphs (f) and (g) of Paragraph 3.

Request to Public

1. Democracy practices have granted the public freedom of speech, practices and living. Such freedoms should not harm others. Diverse views of others should be understood, but should not be disturbed or harassed. However, with the reason for human rights, some persons are now under pressure, harassed and threatened in breaching the laws. Undisciplined acts could lead to tarnishing the image of democracy.
2. For preventing destructive actions against the stability of the State, the safety of the public and the rule of law, it is also required to take proper actions in line with the law.
3. All the people who favour justice, freedom, equality and safety are requested to oppose breaching the laws and prevent such actions for the benefit of country and people.

Voting fraud was terrible

IN holding the 2020 election, as it was the time of breaking out of Covid-19, votes were cast under the social distancing. Votes were cast by 71 per cent. Large numbers of difference were found in the inspection of the voting result, and such findings were released. Requests were made for addressing the differences in voting results many times. There were more than 50,000 vote-rigging in Myeik Township and over 30,000 in Kyunsu Township, in addition to more than 10 million across the nation. Voting fraud was terrible. Such an event was similar to the act of illegally sitting the examination to take the highest marks. As attempts were made to form the new government by holding the third Hluttaw in addition to absence of addressing the errors on voting list, the Tatmadaw assumed the State responsibilities in accord with Sections 417 and 418 of the Constitution starting from 1 February 2021 and formed the State Administration Council under Section 419. The council was constituted with military and civilian persons in balance, and civilians were appointed as chairmen of region and state administration councils. In fact, the Tatmadaw is taking responsibilities in a short period to ensure genuine democracy and disciplined and firm democracy.

*(Excerpt from the speech to officers, other ranks and their families
in Myeik, Kyunsu and Cocogun stations made by
the Republic of the Union of Myanmar State Administration Council Chairman
Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on 21 March 2021)*

MoTC Union Minister calls for achieving success in works, without interruption of process

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development of human resources and staff welfare, domestic and international flights of MNA and ATR aircraft workshop.

“State service personnel need to stay away from party politics, being loyal to the State and serving their duties with the sacrifice of life,” said the Union Minister. He urged all to strive for achieving success in works without interruption of the work process.

The Union Minister viewed around the aviation control tower of the Department of Civil Aviation, the central workshop of ATR aircraft and the ground service section under Myanmar National Airlines. — MNA

Union Minister Admiral Tin Aung San is looking around the DCA's aviation control tower yesterday.



Union Minister U Ko Ko donates rice to monasteries, nunneries in Zeyathiri

A RICE donation to the monasteries and nunneries was held at Yadana Bhimata Dhamma Beikman Taw of Yadana San Pariyatti Monastery in the Zeyathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Five monks, including Chairman of Zeyathiri Township Sang-

ha Nayaka (Shwegen) Presiding Sayadaw Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Baddanta Vilasa of Yay Sin Kan Oo Monastery, Union Minister for Religious Affairs and Culture U Ko Ko, Permanent Secretary, Directors-General, Deputy Permanent Secretary of Religious Affairs and Promotion

and Propagation of Sasana attended the ceremony.

Firstly, Union Minister and party took five precepts from Sayadaw Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Baddanta Vilasa and listened to the sermons recited by Sayadaws.

Then, the Union Minister

presented religious affairs to the Sayadaws, including the matters related to the reopening of pagodas across the nation starting 8 February following the COVID-19 health rules.

The Union Minister and party donated the offertories to the monks and shared merits

by pouring the water of libation when Sayadaw Agga Maha Ganthavacaka Pandita Baddanta Vilasa finished preaching sermons.

The Union Minister and party donated a total of 157 rice bags for the monasteries and nunneries in Zeyathiri Township of Nay Pyi Taw. —MNA

Pearl and gems emporium in April 2021 continues for fifth day



FIFTY-FIVE of 199 gem lots were sold through an open tender on the fifth-day session of the pearl and gems emporium in April 2021 at the Mani Yadanara Jade Hall in Nay Pyi Taw yesterday.

Open tenders for No 1 to No 450 jade lots were closed at 11 am yesterday, and the jade lots to be sold will be announced at 8 am today.

Gem merchants checked

jade lots displayed in the hall and put price proposals into the tender boxes.

Winning price proposals will be announced for jade lots No 451 to No 900 on 7 April morning, that of jade lots No 901 to 1350 on 8 April morning, that of jade lots No 1351 to No 1800 on 9 April morning and that of jade lots No 1801 to No 2145 on 10 April morning. — MNA

Gemstone merchants are viewing the pearl and gem lots at the emporium yesterday.

28th Myanmar military medical conference held online

THE 28th Myanmar Military Medical Conference was held at the No (2) Military Orthopaedic Hospital (500 bedded) in Mingaladon and No (2) Military Hospital (1,000 bedded) in Nay Pyi Taw through video conferencing yesterday.

Adjutant-General from the Office of the Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Myo Zaw Thein, Chairman of the Tatmadaw Medical Research and Development Committee, Director of Medical Services Brig-Gen Ko Ko Lwin, Senior Military Officials, medical specialists, international medical experts, invitees and interested persons attended the conference.

A total of 668 military workers from other Tatmadaw hospitals and medical corps also joined the conference via the internet from 148 places. Lt-Gen Myo Zaw Thein and Brig-Gen Ko Ko Lwin addressed the conference.

At the conference, "Healthcare Trends in a Pandemic Myanmar Military Medical Practice" was discussed as the symposium of the conference; "Traumatic Brain Injury In Combat Casualty Care", "Cardiovascular Disease in COVID-19 (Practical Approach)", "Managing Non-COVID Respiratory Diseases in the Era of COVID-19", "Challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic in Myanmar Military Nursing Perspective", "Tele Psychiatry in COVID-19 Pandemic", "Role of Insulin Therapy in Management of Diabetes Mellitus", "Immunological Role of Herbs in COVID-19" and 4 Special Talk were discussed as major symposiums.

A total of 14 research papers on Pharmacology, Nursing, Obstetrics and Gynecology and Radiology and other medical subjects were submitted. The 28th Military Medical Conference will be held till 7 April. — MNA

Social protection can rely on social management information system



Union Minister Dr Thet Thet Khine chairs the meeting on social management information system (SMIS) yesterday.

MANAGEMENT of social protection through information technology can operate tasks quickly and precisely with transparency and cutting cost, said Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Dr Thet Thet Khine at the meeting on the building of social management informa-

tion system-SMIS yesterday morning.

She stressed that training for human resources is of importance to effectively apply the technology, adding it is necessary to implement the project under the original schedules.

The director-general of

the Social Welfare Department and officials reported on the construction of the system, efforts to launch the system in January 2022 and the prospect of further quick and precise implementation of a cash assistance programme for social protection and protection of children and women. — MNA



Members of the security forces are seen providing healthcare for the rescued victims.

Passenger boat sinks in Myeik

THE boat, which was carrying 20 passengers, including three boatmen, sank on 4 April as it hit the rock at about five miles off Ma Aine Island in Myeik Township of Taninthayi Region. According to the tip-off, the security forces went to the incident place and found

they were saved by four local boats.

They were then transferred to the military vessel and provided the needed medical services.

The victims were systematically transferred to Yay Kan Taung Village administrator. — MNA

Announcement of Union Election Commission

3 April 2021

1. Regarding the Multiparty General Election held on 8 November 2020, the Union Election Commission has inspected the voter lists and the casting of votes of Yenanchaung Township of Magway Region and Sintgaing Township of Mandalay Region.

2. Findings in respective townships were as follows:

Findings on voter lists in each township

Sr	Township and numbers of polling stations	Township sub-commission	List from Immigration department	Those involved in voting list without citizenship scrutiny cards	Those involved in voter list more than three times holding one CSC	Those involved in voter list more than two times holding one C
1	159 polling stations in Yenanchaung Township of Magway Region	126,865	102,372	12,700	624	12,072
2	142 polling stations in Sintgaing Township of Mandalay Region.	118,479	103,716	9591	584	10,658

3. The Union Election Commission has inspected the withdrawal/receipt/use/remaining of ballot papers used for Pyithu Hluttaw Election of Yenanchaung Township of Magway Region and Sintgaing Township of Mandalay Region together with the respective township election sub-commission, head of police force, Immigration and Population and administrator according to the Hluttaw Election Law Section 53.

4. According to the inspection, a total of 301 polling stations in these two townships took out 279,629 ballots and used 192,857 ballots. It left 81,508 ballots instead of 86,772 ballots. The difference was 6,415 and it found 1,151 extra ballots. The extra/shortage ballots and illegal extra ballots were found at respective poll stations. Findings were as follows:

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in each township

Sr	Township	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Yenanchaung	159	146,421	89,123	57,298	53,574	3,724	
2	Sintgaing	142	133,208	103,734	29,474	27,934	2,691	1,151
	Total	301	279,629	192,857	86,772	81,508	6,415	1,151

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Yenanchaung Township

5. According to the inspection, a total of 159 polling stations in 29 village-tracts in 14 Wards of Yenanchaung Township in Magway Region took out 132,150 ballots and used 88,571 ballots. It left 39,855 ballots instead of 43,579 ballots. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
						Missing	Extra
1	Ward/village tract ballots	132,150	88,571	43,579	39,855	3,724	
2	Township advance ballots	821	552	269	269		
3	Township remaining ballots	13,450		13,450	13,450		
	Township Total	146,421	89,123	57,298	53,574	3,724	

6. A total of 3,724 ballots were missing at 159 polling stations in 29 village-tracts in 14 Wards of Yenanchaung Township and it found 13,450 township remaining ballots at the township election sub-commission.

7. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Total Polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Myoma (north) Ward	4	3,550	2,462	1,088	888	200	
2	Myoma (south) Ward	2	2,050	1,447	603	603		
3	Aoh Po Ward	2	2,350	1,556	794	377	417	
4	Sone Taik Ward	4	2,800	1,884	916	905	11	
5	Shwe Kyar Ngon Ward	3	2,150	1,422	728	683	45	
6	Ywa Thit Ward	5	6,050	4,093	1,957	1,957		
7	Twin Gone Ward	3	2,600	1,325	1,275	975	300	
8	Thuhtay Gone Ward	4	3,050	2,036	1,014	464	550	
9	Myay Ni Khin (north) Ward	3	3,050	1,824	1,226	1,226		
10	Myay Ni Khin (south) Ward	4	2,900	1,842	1,058	1,058		
11	Bay Mai Ward	3	2,700	1,776	924	923	1	
12	Thit Ta Pway Ward	7	5,700	3,870	1,830	1,830		
13	Nyaung Hla Ward	5	4,050	2,754	1,296	1,248	48	
14	Bo Gone Ward	2	1,800	1,196	604	604		
15	Thonesei chauk Village-tract	6	5,350	3,562	1,788	1,711	77	

16	Phaungkataw Village-tract	2	1,800	1,161	639	639		
17	Buekyun Village-tract	1	1,950	1,450	500	500		
18	Kyankaikyun Village-tract	2	1,650	1,187	463	463		
19	Marnmyay Village-tract	6	4,750	3,163	1,587	1,550	37	
20	Pinwa Village-tract	9	6,500	4,627	1,873	1,859	14	
21	Ashaegone Village-tract	4	3,400	2,306	1,094	1,086	8	
22	Kamma Village-tract	4	2,850	1,769	1,081	1,081		
23	Phoekoe Village-tract	4	2,300	1,708	592	542	50	
24	Seinpanpin Village-tract	4	3,750	2,782	968	868	100	
25	Shwetokekan Village-tract	2	1,700	1,250	450	71	379	
26	Magyikan Village-tract	6	4,450	2,809	1,641	1,641		
27	KokkuKhw Village-tract	4	4,650	3,762	888	878	10	
28	Aokeshitgone Village-tract	3	3,550	2,665	885	859	26	
29	Sakhankan Village-tract	3	2,300	1,618	682	682		

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30	Laysintine Vil-lage-tract	2	1,550	964	586	586		
31	Phaungkwe Vil-lage-tract	2	2,400	1,534	866	816	50	
32	Chaing Vil-lage-tract	3	2,450	1,659	791	791		
33	Aintaw Vil-lage-tract	6	5,400	3,621	1,779	1,769	10	
34	Yonekone Vil-lage-tract	3	2,100	1,320	780	580	200	
35	Nyaungpinaine Village-tract	5	3,350	2,232	1,118	1,041	77	
36	Ngar Village-tract	5	3,500	2,385	1,115	765	350	
37	Chaungson Vil-lage-tract	2	1,950	838	1,112	787	325	
38	Wetlwat Vil-lage-tract	6	3,850	2,393	1,457	1,451	6	

39	Yoneseikkyun Village-tract	2	1,350	745	605	555	50	
40	Beseik Vil-lage-tract	3	1,700	1,171	529	529		
41	Wetmaswet Vil-lage-tract	3	2,850	1,717	1,133	783	350	
42	Kangyi Village-tract	4	2,650	1,930	720	720		
43	Sartine Vil-lage-tract	2	1,300	756	544	511	33	
Ward/village-tract ballots			159	132,150	88,571	43,579	39,855	3,724
Township Advance ballots				821	552	269	269	
Township Remaining ballots				13,450		13,450	13,450	
Township Total			159	146,421	89,123	57,298	53,574	3,724

Findings on ballot papers for Pyithu Hluttaw Election in Sintgaing Township

8. According to the inspection, a total of 142 polling stations in 48 village-tracts in 5 wards of Sintgaing Township in Mandalay Region took out 1,330,208 ballots and used 103,734 ballots. It left 27,934 ballots instead of 29,474 ballots. The extra/shortage ballots were found at respective poll stations.

Sr	Subject	Withdrawal		Used		Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground		Difference					
		Missing	Extra	Missing	Extra		Missing	Extra	Missing	Extra				
1	Ward/Village-tract ballots			128,350		103,275			25,075		23,535		2,691	1,151
2	Township advance ballots			4,858		459			4,399		4,399			
Total				133,208		103,734			29,474		27,934		2,691	1,151

9. According to the inspection, 2,691 ballots were missing and it found 1,151 extra ballots at 142 polling stations in 48 village-tracts in 5 wards of Sintgaing Township. They used 459 township advance ballots and saved 4,399 township remaining ballots.

10. Findings were as follows:

Sr	Ward/Village-tract	Total polling station	Withdrawal	Used	Exact remaining	Remaining on the Ground	Difference	
							Missing	Extra
1	Tanai Ward	1	1,050	866	184	184		
2	Tayokesu Ward	2	1,600	1,238	362	361	1	
3	Yanaungmyin Ward	2	1,450	1,083	367	367		
4	Kanthit Vil-lage-tract	1	850	665	185	185		
5	Kyetsein Vil-lage-tract	1	1,050	936	114	164		50
6	Kyethmyar Village-tract	1	1,150	967	183	183		
7	Thapyayyo Village-tract	2	2,500	2,045	455	455		
8	Ywahaung-gone Vil-lage-tract	1	1,350	1,009	341	341		
9	Theinnigone Village-tract	1	1,050	875	175	175		
10	Ohnpinchan Village-tract	3	2,250	1,908	342	194	148	
11	Tawma Vil-lage-tract	3	2,950	2,371	579	229	350	
12	Sonye Vil-lage-tract	7	6,200	5,245	955	955		
13	Taungyin Village-tract	2	3,450	3,324	126	976		850
14	Bailin Vil-lage-tract	5	4,350	3,367	983	978	5	
15	Moekaung Village-tract	5	4,350	3,611	739	741		2
16	Myonepaung Village-tract	1	700	577	123	123		
17	Monepin Vil-lage-tract	4	4,050	3,676	374	322	52	

18	Shankar Vil-lage-tract	2	2,900	2,221	679	679		
19	Taohn Vil-lage-tract	3	2,100	1,793	307	357		50
20	Daunggyi Village-tract	4	2,500	2,089	411	451		40
21	Methwaybote Village-tract	7	7,350	6,001	1,349	1,199	150	
22	Banyarlaw Village-tract	2	1,150	367	783	33	750	
23	Eipyi Vil-lage-tract	3	2,500	2,144	356	406		50
24	Nyaungpingyi Village-tract	4	2,600	2,208	392	394		2
25	Myoma Vil-lage-tract	2	2,000	1,458	542	542		
26	Myothit Vil-lage-tract	1	1,150	934	216	216		
27	Kanswel Vil-lage-tract	1	650	556	94	44	50	
28	Se Vil-lage-tract	4	4,350	3,621	729	729		
29	Myowonkon Village-tract	3	1,850	1,543	307	307		
30	Letwe Vil-lage-tract	2	1,550	692	858	308	550	
31	Thingathone Village-tract	1	1,050	904	146	146		
32	Thintaungnge Village-tract	1	900	767	133	133		
33	Uyingyi Vil-lage-tract	1	950	822	128	128		
34	Tetgyi Vil-lage-tract	1	400	356	44	44		
35	Nanni Vil-lage-tract	3	2,450	2,013	437	487		50
36	Ohnletkauk Village-tract	1	800	707	93	96		3

37	Kyethlyer Village-tract	1	550	480	70	70		
38	Kathaekone Village Tract	1	550	420	130	130		
39	Sawye Vil-lage-tract	2	1,750	1,512	238	238		
40	Hinngu Vil-lage-tract	3	2,450	2,022	428	430		2
41	Thaetee Vil-lage-tract	1	350	266	84	84		
42	Myaungson-egyi Vil-lage-tract	1	900	813	87	87		
43	Myaung-sonenge Village-tract	1	500	440	60	60		
44	Shanywa Vil-lage-tract	1	800	714	86	86		
45	Thitkhauk Village-tract	5	3,200	2,482	718	720		2
46	Paleik Vil-lage-tract	18	18,750	13,757	4,993	4,505	488	

47	Khanlu Vil-lage-tract	2	2,550	1,969	581	581		
48	Tabetswel Village-tract	7	6,850	5,305	1,545	1,448	97	
49	Letpanchyaik Village-tract	1	800	749	51	101		50
50	Htantaw Vil-lage-tract	3	1,500	1,299	201	201		
51	Wunto Vil-lage-tract	3	2,550	2,127	423	373	50	
52	Sisone Vil-lage-tract	2	2,700	2,209	491	491		
53	Myaukkai Village-tract	2	2,050	1,752	298	298		
	Ward/village-tract ballots	142	128,350	103,275	25,075	23,535	2,691	1,151
	Township Remaining ballots		4,858	459	4,399	4,399		
	Township Total	142	133,208	103,734	29,474	27,934	2,691	1,151

Union Election Commission

Markets, banks, hospitals, bus lines resume operations as normal; people peacefully visit pagodas

THE pagodas, including buildings or temples of other religions, were reopened to the public starting 8 February following the COVID-19 health rules.

The pilgrims and visitors, including monks and nuns, visited the Shwedagon of Yangon Region, Maha Muni Pagoda of Mandalay Region and Uppatasanti Pagoda of Nay Pyi Taw Council Area and other pagodas of regions and states.

Similarly, the people of other religions peacefully do their religious affairs at their respective religious buildings.

Moreover, the markets in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay and other regions and states are alive with the vendors as usual. The banks, hospitals, airlines, train services, boat services and bus services also resume their operations.

The bus lines in Yangon also run as normal daily. — MNA

Devotees are worshipping at the Kyaikhteyoe Pagoda.



Security measures conducted to ensure community peace



Tatmadaw, police force and fire brigade members are taking the joint security measures at night. — MNA

TATMADAW, Police Force and Fire Brigade jointly conducted security measures to ensure the State's stability, security of people, the rule of law and community peace starting 14 February night.

Tatmadaw, police and fire brigade members also jointly conduct security measures for the peaceful night and community peace in respective regions and states and keep serving security measures the whole day. — MNA

Applications for entrance to post-graduate courses invited

THE Department of Human Resources for Health of the Ministry of Health and Sports issued an announcement inviting applications for the entrance of post-graduate diploma courses, master's studies and doctoral courses to be conducted at medical and medical-related universities from 1 to 30 April 2021. Eligible applicants need to submit subjects on their priority to learn to the Department of Human Resource for Health. For further information, dial 067-3411145/067-3411636, Ext: 832 of the department. — MNA

Chilli growers from Mong Yawng earning regular income



Myanmar also exports fresh chilli to China and Thailand. But, the fresh chillies are mainly exported to Thailand through the Myawady border.

ACCORDING to the chilli growers, the chilli growers from Mong Yawng region in Shan State (East) are harvesting the chili and earning a regular income daily for their family.

“Our local farmers are growing the vegetables and crops and selling them in the market. We are also growing seasonal crops such as cucumber, pumpkin, tomato, watermelon, muskmelon and chilli. Now, the chillies are ripe enough. But it couldn’t earn

us an attractive profit as it did in the early harvest season. We are then selling the chillies back in the market, said a chilli grower from Mong Yawng region.

The local people are growing various chilli species. The chillies are grown within an enclosed space. After 15 days, the chillies are transplanted to the farmlands, and it is needed to put the water into the farms every five days. After one month of transplanting into the fields,

the chilis bloom and bear fruits.

Although the red chillies are priced at K5,000 per kilo in the Mong Yawng region in the harvest season, the price has dropped only to about K2,000 per kilo recently, according to the chilli growers.

Myanmar also exports fresh chilli to China and Thailand. But, the fresh chillies are mainly exported to Thailand through the Myawady border. — Arr Char/GNLM

Black gram price on downswing despite Indian purchase agreement

THE price of black gram (urad) is in the bear market trend regardless of the India purchase agreement.

The reduction of currency in circulation amid the closure of private banks and the political changes contributes to a price decline.

Black gram fetches K78,000-81,000 per three-basket bag in Mandalay market in the first week of April 2021, Win-Win depot from Mandalay reported.

India has notified the annual quota of black gram (400,000 tonnes) imports for its financial year 2021-2022, which will start on 1 April, traders said.

India will grant the licence to their companies. However, the exports of the black gram will take time during the meantime, said an official from Myanmar Pulses, Beans and Sesame Seeds Merchants Association.

At present, the domestic bean market is positively related to supply and demand law. The black gram price depends on the buyers and sellers. There is no official set price, the traders stressed.

Additionally, there is still stock left in India, so the price is likely to remain low. The growers are now encouraged to safely store the beans as the price is expected to rise only in September, a market observer shared his opinion.

The black bean was worth K967,500-11.57 million per tonne in early February 2021, Bayintaung Wholesale Centre's statistics showed. Bayintaung wholesale centre, a primary market for exports via maritime trade, has been closed down since 11 February 2021.

Since early February, the local private banks have shut down, disrupting banking. Consequently, the export companies are buying less in the domestic market.

On 22 May 2020, India rapidly changed the import period of black bean (400,000 tonnes) to three months by August-end 2020 from the earlier set deadline of March 2021, prompting Myanmar's bean body to call for an extension of the deadline, according to its official notice.

Although the bean body asked to extend the August-end

deadline, India still has not responded to the request. Myanmar exported only 100,000 tonnes of black beans then, the association stated.

Nevertheless, India issued a notification on 1 October 2020 to purchase 150,000 tonnes of black beans instead, and the import deadline is March, 2021. The licence is equally granted for India's companies.

At present, about 50,000 tonnes of black beans are stuck in the ports.

Since 2017, India has been setting import quota on beans, including black bean and pigeon peas. Therefore, the growers face difficulties to export their beans to the Indian market.

Myanmar has to export black bean and pigeon peas under a quota system and limit period. Consequently, there is no guarantee that we could get the prevailing market price this year. Following the uncertainty in black bean and pigeon peas markets, the association suggested, in October-end 2020, that the growers cultivate black-eyed bean more.—KK

Companies registered on MyCO exceed 1,700 in Q1: DICA

“THE number of companies registered on the online registry system, MyCO, reached over 1,700 in the first quarter of this year,” stated the statistics released by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration (DICA).

The registration and re-registration of companies on the MyCO website commenced on 1 August 2018, keeping with the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must simultaneously submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5).

During Q1 of 2021, the number of registered companies on MyCO was 1,373 in January, 188 in February and 163 in March, the DICA's statistics showed.

At present, 100 per cent of the applicants are using the online registration platform, the DICA stated.

When the online registry was launched in August 2018, 1,816 new companies registered on MyCO. The figure stood at 2,218 in September 2018, 1,671 in October, 1,431 in November and 1,364 in December 2018.

In 2019, the figure stood at 1,733 in January 2019, 1,419 in February, 1,108 in March, and over 1,045 in April, 1,411 in May, 1,307 in June, 1,428 in July, 1,302 in August and 1,181 in September. The figures reached a fresh new peak of 2,059 in October 2019. Then, 1,615 new companies in November and 1,772 in December were recorded, data of the DICA showed.

Last year, the figures of registered companies stood at 1,415 in January, 1,298 in February and 1,015 in March, only 348 companies in April, 798 in May, 1,314 in June, 1,650 in July, 1,551 in August, 1,378 in September, 1,693 in October, 1,099 in November and 1,521 in December, as per statistics of the DICA.

the DICA.

Besides, all registered companies need to file annual returns (AR) on the MyCO registry system within two months of incorporation. At least once every year (not later than one month after the anniversary of the incorporation), according to Section 97 of Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

According to Section 266 (A) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017, public companies must simultaneously submit annual returns and financial statements (G-5).

All overseas corporations must submit ARs in the prescribed format on MyCO within 28 days of the financial year ending, as per Section 53 (A-1) of the Myanmar Companies Law 2017.

As per DICA's report, more than 16,000 companies were suspended as of September-end for failing to submit AR forms within the due date.

Newly established companies are required to submit ARs within two months of incorporation or face a fine of K100,000 for filing late returns.

The DICA has notified that any company which fails to submit its AR within 13 months will be notified of its suspension (I-9A). If it fails to submit the AR within 28 days of receiving the notice, the system will show the company's status as suspended. Companies can restore their status only after shelling out a fine of K50,000 for the AR fee, K100,000 for the restoration of the company on the register, and K100,000 for late filing of documents. If a company fails to restore its status within six months of suspension, the registrar will strike its name off the register; according to the DICA notice.—NN/GNLM

The screenshot shows the 'WELCOME TO MYANMAR COMPANIES ONLINE (MyCO)' page. It features a search bar at the top with placeholder text 'Enter the Company Name or Registration Number'. Below the search bar are two radio buttons: 'Company Name Starts With' and 'Company Name Includes'. To the right of the search bar is a 'Search' button. Below the search bar, there is a note: 'The MyCO registry will be accepting Registration Forms (Category A) and Re-registration Forms (Category B) as of 1 August due to increased high volumes of filings. Additional terms will be released and available closer to 20 August 2019.' The page also includes links for 'HOME', 'REGISTER A COMPANY', 'COMPANY SEARCH', 'HELP', 'CREATE AN ACCOUNT', and 'LOG IN'.

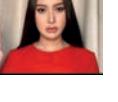
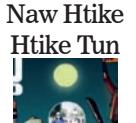
The statistics of Directorate of Investment and Company Administration-DICA.

Those spreading news to affect State stability charged under Section 505-A

The following celebrities and people have been charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code for intentionally committing incitements to the government employees to join CDM to affect government mechanism and for spreading information showing

their support for unlawful CRPH including fake news and other information to unrest riots and threaten the public on the social media.—MNA

The list of people charged under Section 505-A of the Penal Code

Sr	Account name	Profile	Address	Section of Penal Code	Photo
1	Hsu Eaint San https://www.facebook.com/hsuemyatthinnii	 Hsu Eaint San (00859) For Work Contact 0994021161	Thakayta Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
2	Myat Noe Aye https://www.facebook.com/myatnoeayeofficialpage	 Myat Noe Aye (00859)	Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
3	Than Thar Moe Theint https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=10044412910169	 Than Thar Moe Theint (00859)	Dawbon Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
4	Khar Ra https://www.facebook.com/KharRaMyanmarActorOfficial	 Khar Ra (00859)	Kyaughtan Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
5	Khin Hnin Kyi Thar https://www.facebook.com/khin.kyithar	 Khin Hnin Kyi Thar (00859)	Ahlon Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
6	Patricia https://www.facebook.com/patricia.sueshanaing	 Suu Sha Naing (Sue Sha Naing) (00859)	Insein Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
7	Thar Nge www.facebook.com/tharngeofical	 Zaw Win Tun (a) Thar Nge (00859)	Ahmisakan, PyinOoLwin Township, Mandalay Region	505-a	
8	Thazin Nwe Win https://www.facebook.com/thazinnwelwin	 Thazin Nwe Win (00859)	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
9	Travel by Naw Htike https://www.facebook.com/travelbynawthike	 Naw Htike Htike Tun (00859)	Insein Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
10	JulyMoe(Oasis) https://www.facebook.com/julymoic	 July Moe (00859)	Tamway Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
11	Sithu Aung Myint https://www.facebook.com/sithu.aungmyint	 Sithu Aung Myint (00859)	Pazundaung Township, Yangon Region	505-a	

Sr	Account name	Profile	Address	Section of Penal Code	Photo
12	Mratt Kyaw Thu https://www.facebook.com/mrattkthu	 Mratt Kyaw Thu (00859)	Pyay Town, Bago Region	505-a	
13	Dorothy White https://www.facebook.com/dorothy.white.18659	 Hnin Su Phyoe (00859)	Mahaung mye Township, Mandalay Region	505-a	
14	Khin Nant Thar https://www.facebook.com/KNNT26	 Khin Nant Thar (00859)	No. 12, Laydaungkan Road, Laydaungkan Ward, Thingangyun Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
15	Thida Aung https://www.facebook.com/swartay.lay.33449	 Thida Aung (00859)	Thiri Yadanara(3) Street, Pauktawwa, Insein Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
16	Zay Yar Tun https://www.facebook.com/Zayyarreal	 Zay Yar Tun (00859)	Taikkyi Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
17	Kyaw Zay Ya https://www.facebook.com/kyawzayya.5439	 Kyaw Zay Ya (00859)	Kanaung Minthagyi Street, Sethmu Kwatthit, Ywarbe, Pyay Town, Bago Region	505-a	
18	Thu Nway Oo https://www.facebook.com/therundermyintthuso	 Thanda Myint Thu Soe (00859)	Kamayut Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
19	Zin Zae Lwin https://www.facebook.com/zin.zae	 Zin Myo Lwin (00859)	No. 27/A, Ground floor, 167 Street, Tamwaygyi Ward, Tamway Township, Yangon Region	505-a	
20	U Kyawswarwin https://www.facebook.com/u.kyawswarwin.543	 Kyaw Swar Win (00859)	Kyaukthongyi village, Sagaing Region	505-a	

19 new cases of COVID-19 reported on 5 April, total figure rises to 142,530

MYANMAR'S COVID-19 positive cases rose to 142,530 after 19 new cases were reported on 5 April 2021 according to the Ministry of Health and Sports. Among these confirmed cases, 131,819 have been discharged from hospitals.—MNA

Zin Thaw Naing, reporter of Democracy Vision news agency, arrested



Reporter Zin Thaw Naing of the Democracy Vision news agency under arrest.

REPORTER Zin Thaw Naing from Democracy Vision news agency, of whom a file of the lawsuit was opened under Sec-

tion 505 (a) of the Penal Code in Botahtaung Township of Yangon Region, was arrested on 4 April. —MNA

A combined team comprising security forces on patrol in Yangon found a person who stuck a spring post bulletin paper at Bogale Zay bus stop on Maha Bandoola Street in Ward 8 of Botahtaung Township at about 1:30 pm on 4 April.

In the investigation, he was Zin Thaw Naing, 36, a Democracy Vision news agency reporter, son of U Thein Htay from North Okkalapa Township.

Eight spring post bulletin papers, four packets of glue, two ID cards comprising the name of Zin Thaw Naing from Democracy Vision news agency, one soft pipe bearing three tip irons and hummer were found aboard the vehicle he drove. A lawsuit file was opened upon Zin Thaw Naing.

As he was involved in the riots, he was filed at Pazundaung Myoma police station under Section 505 (a) of the Penal Code on 22 February 2021. —MNA

Electric shock causes fire at Yoma water treatment plant

A fire broke out in a furniture warehouse at the Yoma Water Treatment Plant due to an electric shock at 10:50 am on Maezigone street, ward (7), Hline Township in Yangon Re-

gion yesterday.

Members of the security forces and local fire brigade rushed to the scene of the fire with eight fire engines and two water tankers.

The fire was extinguished at about 11:18 am.

It is reported that no human or animal was injured and the warehouse was destroyed by the fire. —MNA



The Yoma Water Treatment Plant was ravaged by a fire yesterday.

Bodies of two female found in Yangon and Mandalay

THE body of an unidentified woman was found in a ditch at the corner of Tapin Shwe Htee road, and Thamine (10) road around 9 am in Mayangon Township in Yangon on 3 April.

The victim was a 40-year-old woman with no external stab wounds, with shaved head and cuts on the leg's left side. Both legs were tied with bicycle tires. Both hands were tied with plastic straps, and the mouth was blocked by bicycle tires.

The body was carried to the General Hospital in Hline-thaya Township.

Similarly, a young woman

was found dead at 8:40 pm at the corner of 53th street and Manawhari Road in Chanmyathazi Township in Mandalay Region on 4 April.

The victim was stabbed in the abdomen, bruises on the right wrist, finger-joints and the left big toe.

According to the investigation, the victim was Ma Htet Htet Win, 19, daughter of U Phy, who lived at the corner of 45th street and 117th street.

The deaths are under investigation as homicide police are investigating to take effective legal actions against the perpetrators. —MNA

Violent attackers destroy public housings, State-owned buildings

A rioter driving a motorbike threw a handmade mine into U Myat Kyaw's compound (former military personnel) in Nyaunggon Ward 5 of Peikon in Shan State (South) at about 7 pm on 3 April and drove away. It exploded near Super Custom vehicle stationed in front of the house. The lower part of the vehicle front door on the right side was damaged in the blast. No human and animal were injured in the incident.

Two violent attackers threw a homemade firebomb made of PVC pipe at Myanma Economic Bank on Thumngala Road in Zawana Ward of Thingangyun Township at about 12:55 pm on 4 April. The blast in front of the bank did not cause any injuries.

At about 7:50 pm on 4 April, a fire broke out at the ward administration office in Nyaungphyu Sakhan Ward in Taunggyi. While security forces and firefighters put out the fire using ten fire trucks, Aung Paing Htwe (aka) Aung Paing, son of U Zaw Nyunt, bumped firefighters with his Toyota Mark-II vehicle. When he was arrested, two broken petroleum bottles and three

bottles in good condition were seized aboard the car. Three injured firefighters were sent to the local military hospital to receive medical treatment.

At 7:20 am on 4 April, a violent attacker threw a fire bottle at the ward administration office in Thiri Khema Ward in Mon State's Ye Township. Security forces and firefighters put out the fire using a fire truck and a water bowser. The fire destroyed an office table, a chair and other documents.

At 11:08 pm on 4 April, a fire broke out at the ward administration office at the corner of Shwepyitha 2nd street and Bayint Naung Road in Ward 32 of Dagon Myothit (North) Township.

Security forces found Maung Oo, son of U Khin Than, of Ward 32 in Dagon Myothit (North) dead in the building. An investigation is being conducted for the outbreak of fire.

Efforts are being made for taking action against arrestees and those who committed destruction acts against State-owned buildings and public houses under the law. —MNA

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Due to limitation of space we are only able to publish "Letter to the Editor" that do not exceed 500 words. Should you submit a text longer than 500 words please be aware that your letter will be edited.

India tightens screws as Covid-19 infections hit new record

INDIA'S worst-hit state ramped up its coronavirus restrictions as nationwide the daily infections exceeded 100,000 for the first time on Monday.

The United States is the only nation that has regularly registered so many cases in one day. Brazil recorded triple digits once in March.

In India, hopes at the start of the year that the outbreak may be subsiding in the vast nation of 1.3 billion people have been dashed in recent weeks as a fresh wave pushed the national total to 12.5 million infections and 165,000 deaths.

Maharashtra, the worst-hit state and home to India's financial and entertainment capital Mumbai, recorded nearly 60,000 cases in the last 24 hours.

Struggling state authorities on Sunday tightened the evening curfew to allow only people involved in essential services out of their homes from 8:00 pm to 7:00 am.

The region of 110 million

people will also see weekend lockdowns, with gatherings of over four people banned and places of worship and restaurants shut.

In Mumbai over the weekend, one of Bollywood's biggest stars, Akshay Kumar, became the latest celebrity to test positive.

On Monday, shooting of the religious epic "Ram Setu" that Kumar was making was halted after 45 crew members also tested positive.

"How long shooting remains halted depends on Akshay Kumar's recovery. We can replace all our crew members, but we cannot replace the star of the film," Ashok Dubey from the Federation of Western India Cine Employees told AFP.

Kumar, 53, tweeted meanwhile that he had been hospitalized "as a precautionary measure under medical advice".

Awareness

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government is anxious to avoid imposing a new national



A health worker collects a sample from a passenger for a Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (RT-PCR) test at the Yesvantpur railway station in Bangalore on 5 April 2021. **PHOTO:AFP**

lockdown after a shutdown in March 2020 caused widespread human and economic misery.

Modi on Sunday chaired a high-level meeting and a statement afterwards announced an awareness campaign from April 6-14 "with emphasis on 100-per-

cent mask usage, personal hygiene and sanitation at public places/workplaces and health facilities."

In the capital New Delhi, the chief minister has ruled out a new lockdown despite the surge in cases. Police say they are is-

suing more fines to people not wearing masks.

"The fear of Covid-19 has gone away. Most people don't wear masks properly, including many of my passengers," auto-rickshaw driver Surjit Singh, 68, told AFP.—AFP ■

S. Korea's LG Electronics to end mobile phone production

SOUTH Korean technology company LG Electronics Inc. said Monday it will exit its un-

profitable mobile phone business in the face of stiff competition from rivals like Samsung

Electronics Co.

"LG Electronics has been closely reviewing the direction of its mobile business, and at a board meeting on April 5 it decided to exit the mobile business by July 31," the company said in a statement, adding that it plans to focus on its core business to prepare for the future.

LG Electronics said in January it would consider "all possibilities" for the future of its mobile phone division. The company first started making mobile phones in 1995.

LG Electronics was once the world's third-largest mobile phone maker in terms of market share. But its mobile business has been in the red since the second quarter of 2015, with its accumulated operating losses reaching 5 trillion won (\$4.4 billion) last year, according to Yonhap News Agency.

The company said it will retain the core technologies developed through its mobile phone business and apply them to existing and future products.—Kyodo News ■



LG Electronics Inc.'s smartphones are pictured in Seoul in May 2020. **PHOTO: KYODO NEWS**

Search for survivors called off as Bangladesh ferry toll rises to 28

THE search for survivors from a ferry disaster in Bangladesh was called off on Monday, officials said, with the death toll rising to 28 when rescuers pulled the vessel from the water and found bodies inside.

The one-and-a-half storey ferry was lifted from the heavily polluted Shitalakshya River in the central district of Narayanganj on Monday, some 18 hours after it sank following a collision with a bigger cargo vessel on Sunday.

"We have found 23 bodies today... Five bodies were found Sunday night," local official Mustain Billah told AFP.

Six children were among the dead, he added.

The vessel, named Sabit Al Hasan, sank less than an hour after it had departed Narayanganj, 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the capital Dhaka, officials told AFP.

A local police inspector said the ferry was packed with passengers after the government confirmed it would im-

pose a seven-day lockdown across the country to combat the recent rise in coronavirus cases.

Billah said the ship was carrying at least 46 people when it left.

"Some 20 people swam to safety after the vessel sank," he told AFP.

He said search operations, which were led by fire brigade divers and other rescuers, were called off Monday evening as authorities believed no one else was missing.

Hundreds of onlookers and relatives of the missing had watched from the shore, but many have since left, he said.

"I don't think anyone is missing as most of the relatives have left the riverbanks," Billah said, adding that authorities had ordered a probe into the accident.

Local police chief Dipak Saha said rescue efforts on Sunday had been hampered for hours by a powerful storm that hit after the accident.—AFP ■

UK to announce new international travel rules



Britain's Chief Medical Officer for England Chris Whitty (L), Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson (C) and Britain's Chief Scientific Adviser Patrick Vallance (R) give an update on the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic during a virtual press conference inside the new Downing Street Briefing Room in central London on March 29, 2021. England entered the second phase of its lockdown easing on Monday thanks to a successful vaccination drive, but the government is urging vigilance as another wave of coronavirus sweeps Europe. **PHOTO : AFP**

BRITAIN will on Monday set out plans to restart international travel, using a "traffic-light" system as the country cautiously emerges from lockdown.

The UK has set a tentative date of May 17 to relaunch foreign travel, currently banned except for a handful of permitted reasons. This has created

massive pent-up demand for summer holidays abroad.

Travel destinations will be ranked green, amber or red according to virus risk, Downing Street said late Saturday, with the government to provide more details on Monday.

"We are doing everything we can to enable the reopen-

ing of our country... as safely as possible," Prime Minister Boris Johnson said.

The government said the new system "will help ensure the UK's vaccine progress isn't jeopardised and provide clear guidance for travellers".

People heading to low-risk "green" countries will simply take a virus test before and after they travel, the government said.

But those going to amber or red countries will have to self-isolate or quarantine afterwards.

Health minister Edward Argar said as cases surge on the European continent, Britain would have to be "very careful" as it considered further restrictions.

"One of the things we don't want to see — and just as the vaccination programme is working so well — is getting new variants or risking new variants getting imported into this country," he said.

Currently people arriving in the UK from abroad are required

to self-isolate for 10 days.

British nationals who arrive from a banned "red list" of high-risk countries face costly quarantine in government-approved hotels.

The government urged people not to book summer holidays, saying it was "too early to predict" which would be the green-lighted countries.

The government has announced it will allow a number of people to attend public events such as football matches from this month in trials of a virus certification system.

'Virus passports'?

But it has not made clear whether it will issue "virus passports" for international travel, an idea backed by many tourism-dependent countries and airlines but opposed by more than 70 UK MPs.

Argar said the government was still considering measures like Israel's green passes, which allow Covid-vaccinated people access to hotels, bars and other services. —AFP ■

NEWS IN BRIEF

Ethiopian Airlines pilot lands at wrong Zambia airport

AN Ethiopian Airlines cargo plane flying into Zambia accidentally landed at an airport that is still under construction, a government official said Monday. The plane hit the tarmac on Sunday at the uncompleted airport in Zambia's northern Copperbelt province, which is currently served by the Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe International Airport around 15 kilometres (nine miles) away.

The transport ministry's permanent secretary Misheck Lungu said the pilot had landed at the future Copperbelt International Airport "by error". —AFP ■

Encrypted messages lead to 28 tonnes of cocaine in Belgium

THE Belgian customs service has uncovered tonnes of cocaine worth nearly \$1.4 billion in Antwerp after police decrypted communications sent by criminal gangs, officials said Monday. Federal police ran a two-year inquiry into organized crime which involved 500 million messages sent on Sky ECC devices sold by Canada-based firm Sky Global, the Antwerp prosecutor's office said in a statement.

A total of 27.64 tonnes of cocaine has been seized at the port of Antwerp since February 20, including 11 tonnes found in a container overnight Friday-Saturday. —AFP ■

Israel's Netanyahu on trial as coalition talks ramp up

ISRAEL'S legal and political dramas converged Monday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu faced court in his corruption trial while his bid to form a government after another inconclusive election reached a critical phase.

The 71-year-old veteran premier — who last month contested his fourth election in less than two years — arrived at the Jerusalem courthouse where he was met by supporters but also opponents who called him Israel's "crime minister".

Israel's first premier to be indicted in office was ordered to appear in person at Jerusalem's District Court for opening arguments in a case where he is charged with bribery, fraud or breach of trust.

As court proceedings got underway, President Reuven Rivlin began two days of talks to determine which party leader has the best chance of forming a stable government following the March 23 election.

Israel remains mired in the worst political crisis in its 73-year history, with voters and the 120-member parliament bitterly split over whether Netanyahu deserves to extend his record tenure of 12 consecutive years.

Netanyahu's right-wing Likud party finished first in the polls almost two weeks ago, winning 30 seats, but his path to a 61-seat absolute majority is precarious. The anti-Netanyahu camp, however, lacks a clear leader, is ideologically divided and will also struggle to forge a majority coalition.

'Serious corruption'

Netanyahu, wearing a black face mask and a dark suit, sat in court as lead prosecutor Liat Ben-Ari told judges that the premier was involved in "a serious case of government corruption".

He has been charged with accepting improper gifts and seeking to trade regulatory favours with media moguls in exchange for positive coverage — allegations which he denies.

Ben-Ari said Netanyahu had "made illegitimate use of the great governmental power entrusted to him," in his dealings with media executives "in order to advance his personal affairs".

With permission from judges, Netanyahu left the courtroom before the prosecution called its first witness, the former chief executive of the Walla news site, Ilan Yeshua.

Yeshua testified that he had regularly received instructions



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (C) leaves the courtroom at district court in Jerusalem on April 5, 2021, during his corruption trial. **PHOTO : AFP**

from Netanyahu's allies to post articles favourable to the prime minister and information that smeared the premier's rivals.

"It was clear that we were a website that did what the prime minister's office asked us," Yeshua told the court. According to Yeshua's testimony, a key target of Netanyahu's alleged smear campaign was Naftali Bennett, the prime minister's estranged former protege who now leads the religious nationalist Yamina party.

That fact now spells a political problem for Netanyahu, who will likely need Bennett's support in order to form a government. —AFP ■

Presidential meetings

Meanwhile Rivlin, whose presidential residence was also the site of an anti-Netanyahu protest, was meeting with party officials throughout the day.

According to custom, he will give the leader with the most recommendations from individual lawmakers a 28-day window to form a government. That can be extended by 14 days at the president's discretion.

The recommendations were proceeding as expected, with Likud and the two ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties, which control 16 seats, endorsing a Netanyahu-led government. —AFP ■

Tribal clashes in Sudan's Darfur kill 18: medics

TRIBAL clashes in Sudan's restive Darfur region have killed at least 18 people and wounded 54, a local doctors' committee said Monday. "The committee recorded 18 fatalities and 54 wounded, who are receiving medical care at Al-Jeneina Teaching Hospital," the West Darfur Doctors' Committee said in a statement, citing clashes on Saturday and Sunday.

"On Monday, we woke up to the sound of gunfire... clashes are still ongoing and have spread to the western suburbs of the town (Al-Jeneina)," Abdellrahman Ahmed, an eyewitness, told AFP. —AFP ■

Over 100 dead in Indonesia, East Timor floods, dozens missing

TROPICAL cyclone Seroja pounded Indonesia and East Timor Monday after torrential rains triggered floods and landslides that have killed at least 113 people and left dozens more missing.

Packing heavy winds and rain, the storm heaped more misery on the Southeast Asian nations after Sunday's disaster turned small communities into wastelands of mud, uprooted trees and forced thousands of people into shelters.

Downpours are expected over the next day as the storm triggers offshore waves as high as six metres (20 feet), Indonesia's disaster agency said.

The cyclone, which was picking up strength as it moved towards the west coast of Australia, hampered efforts to reach trapped survivors.

At least 86 people have been killed in Indonesia, with another 71 missing, while 27 have died in East Timor, a tiny half-island nation of 1.3 million that lies be-



Residents stand along the water's edge by damaged homes after heavy rains and strong winds lashed East Timor's capital Dili overnight causing extensive flooding on 4 April 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

tween Indonesia and Australia.

Its capital Dili was inundated, with the front of its presidential palace transformed into a mud pit.

Swept down a mountainside

In Indonesia's remote East Flores municipality, torrents of mud washed over homes, bridges

and roads.

Images from Indonesia's search and rescue agency showed workers digging up mud-covered corpses before placing them in body bags. On Lembata, an island east of Flores, parts of some villages were swept down a mountainside and carried

to the shore of the ocean.

Soon after flash floods began tearing into resident Basir Langoday's district in the early morning, he heard screams for help from a nearby home covered in rubble. "There were four of them inside. Three survived but the other one didn't make it," he

told reporters.

Langoday and his friends scrambled to try and save the trapped man before he was crushed to death. "He said 'hurry, I can't hold on any longer,'" Langoday added. Juna Witak, another Lembata resident, joined his family at a local hospital where they wept over the corpse of his mother, who was killed in a flash flood Sunday. Her body was found by the seashore.

"There was a rumbling sound and the floods swept away homes, everything," Witak said. **'Medicine, food, blankets'**

The European Union said it was ready to offer assistance to poverty-stricken East Timor, officially known as Timor-Leste.

"The catastrophic floods come at a time when Timor-Leste is working hard to contain the spread of Covid-19 among its population, putting a considerable additional strain both on resources and on the Timorese people," the EU said.—AFP ■

Vietnam PM Phuc picked as new president



Combined photo shows Nguyen Xuan Phuc (L) and Pham Minh Chinh. **PHOTO: KYODO**

VIETNAM'S Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc was elected Monday as the country's new president as members of the ruling Communist Party voted in the National Assembly.

Phuc took the second-highest post in the country's leadership which had been concurrently taken by top leader Nguyen Phu Trong, general secretary of the party. With the leadership of Trong, Phuc is seen to maintain a neutralist stance between the United States and China.

Trong is serving a rare

third term in the top post.

While the result of vote on new prime minister is not yet announced, Pham Minh Chinh, the 62-year-old head of the party's Central Organization Committee, is expected to win election.

Phuc, 66, served the nation's prime minister since 2016 after holding key government positions including vice prime minister. The prime minister is effectively the country's No. 3.

The session of the National Assembly, which started on March 24, will be held until Thursday.— Kyodo News ■

Japan, US to ink partnership deal on climate change

THE Japanese and US governments are arranging to sign a partnership deal on climate change when Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga meets with President Joe Biden later this month, diplomatic sources said Monday.

Tackling global warming is expected to be a focus of the April 16 meeting in Washington, along with affirming the strength of the Japan-US alliance and cooperation in efforts to realize a free and open In-

do-Pacific amid China's growing assertiveness in the region.

"I hope Japan and the United States can take the lead in tackling climate change," Suga told a parliamentary session. The meeting comes as Biden has vowed to make climate

change a top priority of his administration, reversing his predecessor Donald Trump's decision to pull out of the Paris Agreement and inviting world leaders to a virtual summit on the issue on April 22-23.

Suga said he plans to unveil Japan's new target for reducing carbon emissions by 2030 soon, and that he hopes to work with Biden to push China, the world's biggest emitter of CO₂, to "do its part as a global power."

According to the sources, Suga and Biden are slated to agree to set up working groups to boost cooperation on climate change, COVID-19 measures and cutting-edge technologies.— Kyodo News ■

Hashida, writer of acclaimed Japanese TV drama "Oshin," dies at 95

SUGAKO Hashida, a scriptwriter known for the internationally acclaimed television drama series "Oshin" in the 1980s, died Sunday of lymphoma at her home in Atami, Shizuoka Prefecture, her foundation said Monday. She was 95.

The series, which originally aired from 1983, depicted the life of a woman who was born in a poor farming village and became the successful founder

of a supermarket chain. It was broadcast in dozens of countries including China, Iran, Thailand and the United States.

In Japan, Hashida also earned support from housewives with her use of dry humour to portray families.

In another hit TV drama series, "Wataru Seken wa Oni Bakari," which started in 1990, she depicted very common issues in Japanese households

such as the tensions between a housewife and her mother-in-law.

Hashida, whose real name was Sugako Iwasaki, was born in Seoul. She became a TV drama scriptwriter after joining Shochiku Co. She received the Order of Culture in 2020 from the Japanese government for her outstanding achievements and cultural contributions.— Kyodo News ■

Three talking points from the Premier League

MANCHESTER City are just 11 points away from clinching a third Premier League title in four years as even a much-changed side from Pep Guardiola outclassed third-placed Leicester 2-0 at the King Power.

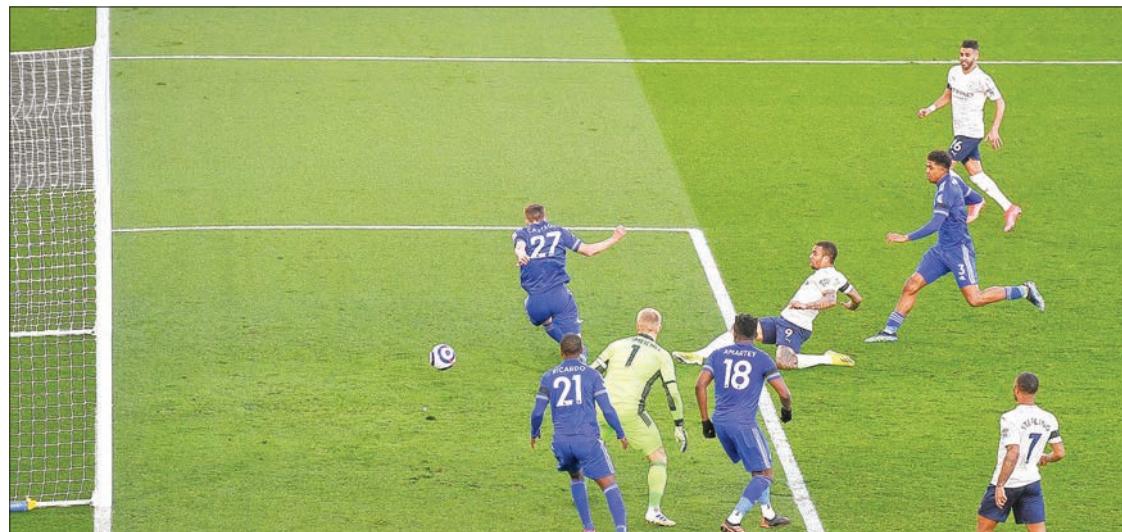
Behind City, Liverpool were the big winners of the weekend as they produced arguably their best performance of 2021 to thrash Arsenal 3-0 at the Emirates.

Victory for Jurgen Klopp's men, allied to dropped points for Chelsea and Tottenham, means all three are separated by just two points in the fight for a top-four finish. At the other end of the table, Fulham missed a great opportunity to move out of the bottom three as they let a 1-0 lead slip late on to lose 3-1 at Aston Villa.

Liverpool find their groove

Liverpool's chances of a return to the Champions League next season seemed all but gone when Fulham became the sixth consecutive visiting side to win at Anfield a month ago.

However, the Reds looked refreshed by a two-week layoff during the international break for many of their star players. Even Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta admitted his side were lucky to escape



Manchester City's Brazilian striker Gabriel Jesus (C right) shoots to score his team's second goal during the English Premier League football match between Leicester City and Manchester City at King Power Stadium in Leicester, central England on April 3, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

with only a three-goal margin of defeat as Liverpool produced a performance worthy of champions on the day they mathematically could no longer retain their title. "It was a very important statement for us because we need to show that we fight for it. We cannot only talk about it, we have to show it on the pitch," said Klopp on his side's chances of climbing back into the top four.

Chelsea's shock collapse to a 5-2 defeat with 10 men against West Brom helped Liverpool's cause to close the gap between

the two sides to just two points.

Liverpool also have the better run in, but it is far from a two-horse race. Tottenham edged ahead of Liverpool on goal difference despite blowing a late lead to draw 2-2 at Newcastle.

West Ham can move fourth if they win at Wolves on Monday, while Everton have two games in hand to overturn a five-point deficit on Chelsea.

Is Kane too good to stay at Spurs?

Spurs' latest failure to hold onto a lead at St James' Park will

do little to quell the speculation over Harry Kane's future.

The England captain was again in supreme form, scoring his side's two goals to move top of the Premier League scoring charts. Kane has now scored 29 goals in all competitions for Tottenham, but unless Spurs shock Man City in the League Cup final later this month, will see another season go by at club level without a trophy. City, Manchester United, Barcelona and Paris Saint-Germain have all been linked with a move for the 27-year-old in re-

cent weeks. Tottenham chairman Daniel Levy's asking price for his prized asset may prove too high in a deflated transfer market due to the economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic.

But Kane refused to rule out a move during the international break and will not want to spend another of his peak years without Champions League football. Fulham not 'horrible' enough A point for Newcastle also had a big impact on the bottom of the table as the Magpies moved three points clear of Fulham.

Scott Parker's men were well set to move out of the bottom three thanks to Aleksandar Mitrovic's first Premier League goal since September.

But Fulham collapsed to concede three times in the final 12 minutes at Villa Park and leave their manager bemoaning a lack of experience. "Sometimes you need to be horrible, play the game in the right territory," said Parker.

"It's a young team but we were naive and made silly mistakes. After the first goal, we dropped our intensity and it affected us too much and we weren't streetwise enough." —AFP

Fallen giants seek revival as Real Madrid, Liverpool battle again



Spain's defender Sergio Ramos shakes hands with Spain's coach Luis Enrique (R) as he runs onto the pitch during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 qualification football match between Spain and Kosovo at La Cartuja Olympic stadium in Seville on March 31, 2021. **PHOTO: AFP**

LIVERPOOL'S last dance with Real Madrid ended in painful defeat, with Mohamed Salah's shoulder dislocated by Sergio Ramos dragging him to the ground and goalkeeper Loris Karius left apologizing to his fans.

Yet Karius's two errors, which handed Madrid a 13th European triumph in the 2018 Champions League final, were also the start of a journey for Liverpool.

Karius was ruthlessly cast aside and Alisson Becker signed

for a then world record fee for a goalkeeper.

A year later Liverpool were the ones hoisting the Champions League trophy after beating Tottenham Hotspur in Madrid. Last season, an even heavier burden was lifted when they were crowned English champions for the first time in 30 years.

But those highs have been followed by a fall from grace as Liverpool prepare to face Real again in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final in Madrid on Tuesday.

Fortress Anfield has turned into a visitors' dream with fans absent because of the coronavirus pandemic.

After nearly four years without a home league defeat, Liverpool have lost six in a row for the first time in the club's history. Jurgen Klopp's men are in a scrap just to make it into next season's Champions League via a top-four finish in the Premier League. —AFP

Spieth ends title drought at Texas Open just in time for Masters

FORMER world number one Jordan Spieth ended his near four-year victory drought Sunday, gearing up for next week's Masters with a triumph at the US PGA Tour Texas Open.

Spieth, who hadn't won since capturing his third major title at the 2017 British Open at Royal Birkdale, signalled he's again a force to be reckoned with as the game's best look toward the first major championship of 2021 at Augusta National.

"This is a monumental win for me," Spieth said. "It's one that I've certainly thought about for a long time."

Spieth fired seven birdies in a six-under-par 66, holding off tenacious playing partner Charley Hoffman to win by two strokes with an 18-under-par total of 270.

Hoffman had cut Spieth's lead to one before Spieth birdied the 17th hole at TPC

San Antonio, Hoffman's own 66 putting him on 16-under 272.

Now Spieth heads to Augusta National, where he was just 21 when he won his first major title at the 2015 Masters, going on to win the US Open the same year.

After years in the wilderness the 27-year-old American had been knocking at the door, holding the 54-hole lead at both Phoenix and Pebble Beach this year. He was tied for the lead going into the final round on Sunday with England's Matt Wallace, with Hoffman two shots back.

Wallace closed with a two-under-par 70 for third place on 274.

"I actually felt really light, felt like I just wanted to come out and smile and try to have some fun," Spieth said, adding that "lightness" was something he'd struggled to find even as he contended earlier this year. —AFP